

Seoul Museum of Art announces SMB13 catalogue publication



Catalogue image of The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale *Séance: Technology of the Spirit*, Seoul Museum of Art. Photo: tabial. Designed by nonplace studio

SeMA, Seoul Museum of Art (Seosomun-dong) 61
Deoksugung-gil, Jung-gu, 04515 Seoul, South Korea

This richly illustrated publication documents, contextualizes, and expands upon the 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale, *Séance: Technology of the Spirit*. Curated by Anton Vidokle, Hallie Ayres, and Lukas Brasiskis, the exhibition explores the entanglement of art and spiritual practice from the dawn of modernity to the present, connecting the mystics and mediums who prefigured the emergence of modern and abstract art to contemporary artists from around the world. Comprising 340 color pages across 650 in total, this bilingual English–Korean publication presents a map of that complex historical relationship.

Eleven newly commissioned texts reflect on the influence of marginalized belief systems on the development of modern and contemporary art, collectively proposing an alternative—

or complement—to the prevailing formalist, social, or materialist accounts. They range from an interview with the pioneering curator **Alexandra Munroe** on the Japanese religious movement Oomoto to a major new essay by **Johanna Hedva** riffing on artificial intelligence, doom, and the meaning of freedom in a deterministic universe. Introduced by editor Ben Eastham, each of these texts was commissioned in response to one of the thematic “chapters” into which the exhibition is divided.

Hwang Rushi, a leading scholar in Korean folk traditions, links shamanic funerary rituals on the peninsula to expressions of working-class and feminist solidarity through the story of Princess Bari, who guides souls to the afterlife. In doing so, she sheds new light on the exhibition’s relationship to its setting and the capacity of art to move across the boundaries separating life from death. Texts by **Lukas Brasiskis** and **Elena Vogman** examine the long association of cinema with séances as means of conjuring visions of the dead and channeling unconscious forces; in the same vein, **Nikolay Smirnov** reflects on the supernatural films of indigenous Yakutian cinema, offering a new way of reading those works in the exhibition that stage the return of beliefs, people, and powers repressed by colonial projects.

The potential of sound to move us outside our subjective experience of the world is another key element of the show that is expanded upon in this publication. An essay by **Daniel Muzyczuk** links musicians as distinct as twelve-tone pioneer Anton Webern and New Age mystic Meredith Young-Sowers by their desire to attune their music to the underlying structure of the universe; **Sanna Almajedi**, curator of a dedicated “sound room,” expounds on the “deep listening” espoused by Pauline Oliveros and the work of those sound artists who have used experimental technologies to bridge the worlds of matter and spirit. The very means by which we distinguish between what is “real” and “unreal” might itself be called into question, writes theorist **Namsee Kim**, who sees in it the Enlightenment tendency to enforce binary separations that legitimate an anthropocentric worldview.

Is the separation between art and spiritual experience itself a product of modernity? Writing about the recent explosion of interest in Hilma af Klint, curator and art historian **Maria Lind** questions what it means for devotional objects to circulate in the commercialized culture. In doing so, she returns us to **Anton Vidokle**'s argument that the culture of today cannot be understood independently of the spiritual revolutions that characterized the advent of industrial modernity. If this essay outlines the exhibition's narrative structure, then **Hallie Ayres**'s sets out its destination: a "re-enchantment of everyday life" that might counter the damaging separation of spirit from body and meaning from material.

Séance: Technology of the Spirit is co-published by Seoul Museum of Art and Mediabus. The English editor is Ben Eastham, its Korean editor is Jihee Jun, and the photographs were taken by Cheolki Hong. It is designed by nonplace studio (Shanghai). The publication will be available for purchase at The Reference, the art bookshop on the 3rd floor of the Seoul Museum of Art, as well as at The book society and through their respective websites. Distribution in the US and Europe will be handled through Idea Books.

Press Inquiries | contact@mediacityseoul.kr

For high-resolution images, please follow the below

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gTfw9vcTp7D8UPwoOaNCPkz2WRFhGOOW?usp=drive link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gTfw9vcTp7D8UPwoOaNCPkz2WRFhGOOW?usp=drive_link)

Catalogue preview

<https://mediacityseoul.kr/en/tomorrow/publications/seance-technology-of-the-spirit-catalogue>

The Reference https://the-ref.kr/shop.detail.php?it_id=1763101537

The book society <https://thebooksociety.org/category/?idx=1286>

Idea Books <https://www.ideabooks.nl/9791193372357-seance-technology-of-the-spirit-13th-seoul-mediacity-biennale>

The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale Website <http://mediacityseoul.kr>

Seoul Museum of Art Website <http://sema.seoul.go.kr>

SMB Social Media channels







Instagram: [instagram.com/seoulmediacitybiennale](https://www.instagram.com/seoulmediacitybiennale)




X(Twitter): [x.com/mediacityseoul](https://twitter.com/mediacityseoul)

Facebook: facebook.com/mediacityseoul

Youtube: youtube.com/seoulmediacitybiennale

[Appendix A] Images and credit

	Catalogue image of The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of the Spirit</i> , Seoul Museum of Art. Photo: tabial. Designed by nonplace studio
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[Appendix B] List of SMB13 participants

With essays by Alexandra Munroe, Anton Vidokle, Daniel Muzyczuk, Elena Vogman, Hallie Ayres, Hwang Rushi, Johanna Hedva, Koichiro Osaka, Lukas Brasiskis, Maria Lind, Namsee Kim, Nikolay Smirnov, and Sanna Almajedi.

Featuring the work of: Aki Onda, Amit Dutta, Angela Su, Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, Anocha Suwichakornpong, Anri Sala, Byungjun Kwon, Colectivo Los Ingrávidos, Corita Kent, Emma Kunz, Ernest A. Bryant III, Georgiana Houghton, Guadalupe Maravilla, Haroon Mirza, Hilma af Klint, Hiwa K, Hsu Chia-Wei, Hyung-Min Yoon, I Ching Systems and Artworks, Jane Jin Kaisen, Joachim Koester, Johanna Hedva, Jordan Belson, Joseph Beuys, Kara Ditte Hansen, Karrabing Film Collective, Kivu Ruhorahoza and Christian Nyampeta, Kray Chen, Laura Huertas Millán, Lucile Olympe Haute, Manuel Mathieu, Maya Deren, Mike Kelley, Minjeong An, Mohamed Gaber, Nam June Paik, Onisaburō Deguchi, ORTA (Alexandra Morozova and Rustem Begenov), Park Chan-kyong, Rafael Queneditt Morales, Rudolf Steiner, Seung-Taek Lee, Shana Moulton, Sky Hopinka, Suzanne Treister, Tamar Guimarães and Kasper Akhøj, Violetta, Wing Po So, Yin-Ju Chen, and Zai Nomura.

Film program at Cinematheque Seoul Art Cinema: Abbas Kiarostami, Alice Rohrwacher, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Camilo Restrepo, Caroline Déodat, Go Takamine, Jean-Luc Godard, Ken McMullen, Lee Jang-ho, Luis Buñuel, Marcel Camus, Mati Diop, Maya Deren, Naomi Kawase, Nina Menkes, Pedro Costa, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Raúl Ruiz, Roberto Rossellini, Souleymane Cissé, and Trinh T. Minh-ha.

SMB13 X Frieze Film Seoul 2025: Amit Dutta, Angela Su, Anocha Suwichakornpong, Colectivo Los Ingrávidos, Hsu Chia-Wei, Jane Jin Kaisen, Joachim Koester, Karrabing Film Collective, Laura Huertas Millán, Sky Hopinka, Tamar Guimarães and Kasper Akhøj, Zheng Yuan

Sound Room: Aki Onda, Annea Lockwood and Ruth Anderson, Antonina Nowacka, Areum Lee, Breyer P-Orridge (Genesis P-Orridge and Lady Jaye Breyer), Carl Michael Von Hausswolff, Jerry Hunt, Jocy de Oliveira, Jung Hee Choi, La Monte Young, Laurie Spiegel, Li Chin Sung (Dickson Dee), Matana Roberts, Meredith Young-Sowers, Walter Smetak, Yara Mekawei

[Appendix C] About Seoul Mediacity Biennale

Since its inauguration in 2000 as an initiative of the Seoul Metropolitan Government, Seoul Mediacity Biennale (SMB) has earned international recognition for its experimental engagement with the contemporary condition, new developments in media, and the changing fabric of the city. These themes were first explored in the Biennale's precursor exhibition, SEOUL in MEDIA, which was held three times between 1996 and 1999. Since then, SMB has presented twelve editions, each embodying ideas and activities that resonate with their time.

Each edition of SMB features approximately 50 artists/teams and attracts an average of 140,000 visitors, mediating various forms of participation through exhibitions and programs held at the Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA) and other satellite venues throughout the city. The pre-Biennale program, operated by SeMA since 2022, explores SMB's identity through the museum's permanent collection and digital archives as a means of reiterating SMB's foundational characteristics.